United Nations

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/1203
12 August 1992

WEDNESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Leaders of two communities in Cyprus hold first joint meeting since beginning of negotiations on Overall Agreement in June.

+ Security Council, in Presidential statement, expresses "utmost concern" over outbreak of fighting in Kabul; calls for end to hostilites and urges Government of Afghanistan to ensure safety and security of all diplomatic and international staff.

+ Special Representative on Somalia confirms agreement to deploy 500 United Nations security personnel in Mogadishu; rapid deployment expected.

+ First stage of joint United Nations/European Community conference on former Yugoslavia to be held in London from 26 to 28 August; Vladimir Petrovsky travels to Paris and Brussels to continue consultations on modalities for conference.

+ Secretary-General to consult panel of independent high-level advisors on future course of United Nations development activities at meeting tomorrow at Headquarters.

+ Security Council, following its first review of sanctions against Libya, concludes that there is no agreement that necessary conditions exist for modification of sanctions.

+ World Food Programme begins deliveries to Kismayo; increases supplies to Mogadishu.

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The two leaders of the Greek and Turkish communities in Cyprus -- President George Vassiliou and Rauf Denktash -- attended this afternoon a joint meeting in New York at the invitation of the Secretary-General. Today's talks were expected to have examined the possibility of an agreement on the basis of the Set of Ideas, including the Secretary-General's suggestions on territorial adjustments and displaced persons.

(more)

For information media—not an official record

It is the first time since the beginning of this round of negotiations, on 18 June, that the two sides accept the principle of a joint meeting. Previously, the negotiations were held under the format of proximity talks. The talks are being held in the framework of Security Council resolution 750 of 10 April which asked the Secretary-General to intensify his efforts to complete a set of ideas and to make specific recommendations for overcoming any outstanding difficulties in the Cyprus problem.

On 13 July, the Council President had issued a statement on behalf of Council members, endorsing the Secretary-General's intentions to invite the two leaders to a joint meeting and to convene an international high-level meeting to conclude the Overall Agreement, as soon as the proximity talks revealed that the two sides were within agreement range.

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The Security Council this afternoon expressed its "utmost concern" over the wide-scale fighting which has broken out in Kabul, Afghanistan, and which has already resulted in heavy loss of lives and property, including to foreign missions and their personnel.

In a Presidential statement read out by Council President Li Daoyu of China, the members of the Council also urged the Afghan authorities to "take every measure to ensure the safety and security of all diplomatic and international missions", and called upon all those involved in the hostilities to cease such hostilities and establish the necessary conditions for the safe evacuation of foreign personnel.

Following the Council consultations, Ambassador Yuliy Vorontsov of the Russian Federation informed correspondents that one member of his Embassy in Kabul had been killed and two other wounded when the premises were hit during the heavy fighting today. He indicated that his Government was seeking the assistance of the Council, as well as of neighbouring countries, such as Pakistan, to evacuate more than 100 of its diplomatic personnel, including their families.

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Ambassador Mohamed Sahnoun, Special Representative of Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali on Somalia, confirmed this afternoon that an agreement to deploy 500 United Nations security personnel in Mogadishu had been finalized earlier today in the capital city of Somalia.

According to a statement issued by the Secretary-General's Spokeswoman, the agreement had been signed by General Mohamed Farah Aidid, Chairman of the United Somali Congress (USC), Colonel Ahmed Omar Jees, Chairman of the Somali Patriotic Movement (SPM), Colonel Mohamed Noor Aliyou, Chairman of SDM, and Mr. Abdi Warsame Isaak, Chairman of SSNM.

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With the previous agreement of Interim President Ali Mahdi Mohamed and General Mohamed Abshir Musse, the way was now clear for the rapid deployment of the security personnel, the statement said.

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Vladimir Petrovsky, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, who was in London on 10 August to discuss the organization of an international conference on Yugoslavia, has informed Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali that the first stage of the joint United Nations/European Community meeting will be held in London from 26 to 28 August.

According to a statement issued today at Headquarters, it was agreed, after consultations with senior government and European Community officials, that the conference be named "The International Conference on the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia". The meeting is a multilateral effort to settle the current crisis in Yugoslavia and will be co-chaired by the European Community and the United Nations.

Mr. Petrovsky is in Paris today and will travel to Brussels for further consultations on the modalities for the Conference.

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The future course of United Nations development activities will be the focus of a meeting the Secretary-General will hold tomorrow at Headquarters with a panel of independent, high-level experts. Jan Pronk, Dutch Minister of Development Cooperation, and Enrique Iglesias, President of the Inter-American Development Bank, will co-chair the panel.

Among the main topics of discussion will be the effectiveness of the United Nations role in development and in international economic cooperation, and further phases in the restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the Organization. The panel will also be discussing institutional arrangements for the follow-up to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development held in June.

The Secretary-General, addressing the High-level Segment of the Economic and Social Council in July, had outlined measures he planned to take to enhance the effectiveness of the economic and social structures of the Organization: among them, his intention to seek "high-level advice" from eminent development experts. Tomorrow's meeting is expected to be the first in a series of such consultations the Secretary-General intends to hold with the panel in coming weeks.

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Following its first review of sanctions imposed against Libya on 15 April, the members of the Security Council decided this afternoon that Libya had not met its requirements for lifting the sanctions.

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The President of the Council, Li Daoyu of China, indicated in a statement issued after the meeting that "there was no agreement that the necessary conditions existed for modification of the measures of sanctions in paragraph 3 to 7 of resolution 748 (1992)."

The Council adopted the sanctions resolution when Libya failed to comply with a 15 April deadline requesting its cooperation in establishing responsibility for the downing of Pan Am flight 103 and UTA flight 772. It decided then to review the sanctions "every 120 days or sooner, should the situation require".

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The scheduled arrival for today of the "Sea Pearl", a World Food Programme (WFP) vessel carrying 3,000 metric tons of sorghum to Kismayo Port, will mark the beginning of a major United Nations food aid delivery programme to Somalia's south-east region.

Food stocks to war-torn Mogadishu have already been boosted with the arrival on 10 August of another WFP ship carrying 10,000 tonnes of commodities. WFP Executive Director, Catherine Bertini, insisted that the WFP deliver food to the people at immediate risk of starvation as soon as food is discharged from the vessel.

Since fierce factional fighting in south-east Somalia, as in the rest of the country, has caused mass displacement of people, the population of Kismayo itself has increased from an estimated 50,000 in 1990 to around 200,000. These mass movements of people, together with the conflict and disruption of agriculture and pastoral activities, have been catastrophic. In some clinics at Kismayo, 30 per cent of the children are malnourished, with more than a third suffering from severe malnutrition.

A total of 35,000 tonnes is expected to be delivered to Somalia from WFP in the next four weeks. Ms. Bertini also indicated that if the security situation were to improve, the Programme would be able to operate efficiently in shipping more food to the country.

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